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Central Intelligence Agency



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COSTA RICA: A MORE MILITANT EXTREME LEFT

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26 September 1985

## Summary \*

The radical left in Costa Rica is stepping up its paramilitary readiness, terrorist capabilities, and anti-US propaganda efforts

We believe the new militancy reflects not only dissatisfaction among younger members with the left's traditional electoral strategy but also factors such as Cuban and Nicaraguan encouragement, fears that Sandinista border incursions may fan anti-Communist sentiment in Costa Rica, and a reaction to the growing US role in Central America. In addition, we believe this growing militancy is part of a long-term effort to prepare for eventual revolutionary action. We believe extreme leftist groups will engage increasingly in violence over the next few years as they seek to increase their capability to exploit social and economic problems. Lacking a professional military and relying on poorly trained and poorly equipped civil and rural guards, Costa Rica is particularly vulnerable even to sporadic leftist violence.

This memorandum was requested by William Walker, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs. It was prepared by the Central America South Branch, Office of African and Latin American Analysis, and was coordinated with the Directorate of Operations and the National Intelligence Officer for Latin America. It contains information available as of 23 September 1985. Questions and comments are welcome and should be addressed to Chief, Middle America/Caribbean Division, ALA,



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·		25 <b>X</b> <sup>2</sup>
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The Costa Rican far	left encompasses four main parties. The largest of them, the	
nresent membership of E	ty (PPC), is a traditional Moscow-oriented Communist party, with a	051/
General Secretary Manuel	,200, according to our best estimates.  I Mora has long favored participating in the electoral system until	25 <b>X</b>
Costa Rican conditions ar	re ripe for revolution. Based on a review of US Embassy	25X
reporting,	however, a new, militant direction in the PPC has become evident	20 <b>/</b>
over the past two years,	Chiefly attributable to the new generation of party members and	
perceived failure of the e	lectoral strategy. As a consequence Mora has been forced to	
members.	gly aggressive course of action to forestall a loss of younger	25 <b>X</b>
moniusis.		25 <b>X</b>
	the	25 <b>X</b>
generational shift toward	greater militancy has been dramatically underscored by a recent	20/
decision to replace Mora	with his sonleader of the party's paramilitary arm-	25X
radicalism.	We believe this move may signal a turn toward more open	25X 25X
Taulcansiii.		23/
The Popular Vangua	rd Party (PVP) split from Mora in late 1983 and openly espouses	
even a more militant philo	Disophy than the PPC.	25 <b>X</b>
		25 <b>X</b> 1
	The party	
Communists have nossess	vers by unemployed peasants in the south where traditionally the sed pockets of substantial influence.	0.514
communists have possess	sed pockets of substantial influence.	25 <b>X</b>
The pro-Cuban New	Republic Movement (MNR), the most terrorist-prone group on the	
ieit, is believed to have ca	arried out the 1981 bombing of a US Marine vehicle and a hank	
robbery earlier this year b	y some of its Cuban-trained operatives	25 <b>X</b>
to Colombia's M. 10 may	the party has participated in violent strikes, and also has ties	257
to Colombia's M-19 move		
the Legislative Assembly	82 for the sake of immediate political gains—such as election to	25X1
	estimated 100-200 militants seek not only the immediate	25X
destabilization of the gove	ernment but the removal of all foreign investors.	25X
		207
The Socialist Party (F	PS) is headed by longtime leftist Alvaro Montero, who is virulently	
and an argent agn	nirer of Fidel Castro. The PS a small party of some 50-100	
endorsing electoral participation	a new, militant direction over the past 18 months while publicly	257
g partion	pation,	25X
	In addition, his party	25 <b>X</b>
spearneaded a propaganda	campaign :: the Voice of America station in Costa Rica and	
likely was behind several b	pomb threat site earlier this year.	25 <b>X</b>

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Few Electoral Succes	ses			
brought it little return in the popular vote for traditional 3-percent well-conceived and well-conceived to militancy, the	<ol> <li>In 1982, the leftise or Assembly deputies share of the preside well-financed campai he major leftist grou</li> </ol>	on; the electoral r t parties suffered s. At the same tim ntial balloting des gn, according to t ps also have incre	oute followed a both relative a se, they failed pite high expe	by the left so far has nd absolute declines to boost their ctations based on a
greater unity, so far v	with marginal results		g., 2.0000	ood comoving
Encouragement From	Abroad			
arms, and training. In	ists rely heavily on Costa	Suba and Nicaragu Ricans have soug	a for advice, f ht assistance	nancial support, rom Libva, Iran, and
the Soviet Union.				
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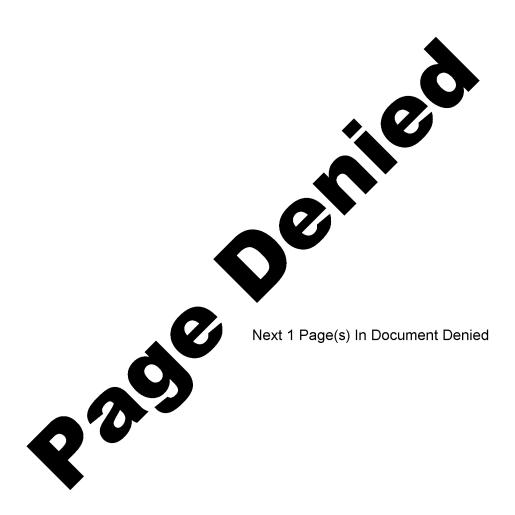
Paramilitary R	eadiness		
opportunity ar the Mora-Can and was forms militants from	ramilitary capability in the event ises to launch a revolution in C as brigade, which fought alongs ally organized in 1981 as the PF both Communist parties, howe actual enerally only 300-350 have bee	e efforts of the Costa Rican extreme let fighting expands in the region or the Costa Rica. The most important organiside the Sandinistas during the 1979 reports paramilitary arm. The brigade incover, as well as members of the MNR at membership may be as high as 800, in active at any one time. In the past, uba, the Soviet Union and Bulgaria.	ization is evolution cludes and the PS.
		ning in Nicaragua. The Sandinista Arm	•
into Costa Rice recent months offensive again	r patroning near the southern b a, the unit has taken a more acti- nst Eden Pastora's anti-Sandinis brigade members have in vere so lacking food and medici	order and to pursue opposition forces ive role in combat, participating in the sta forces in southern Nicaragua. As a incurred many casualties from both coines by mid-September that PPC leaders, accusing the Sandinistas of male	July a result, the embat and
Terrorist Capab	pilities		

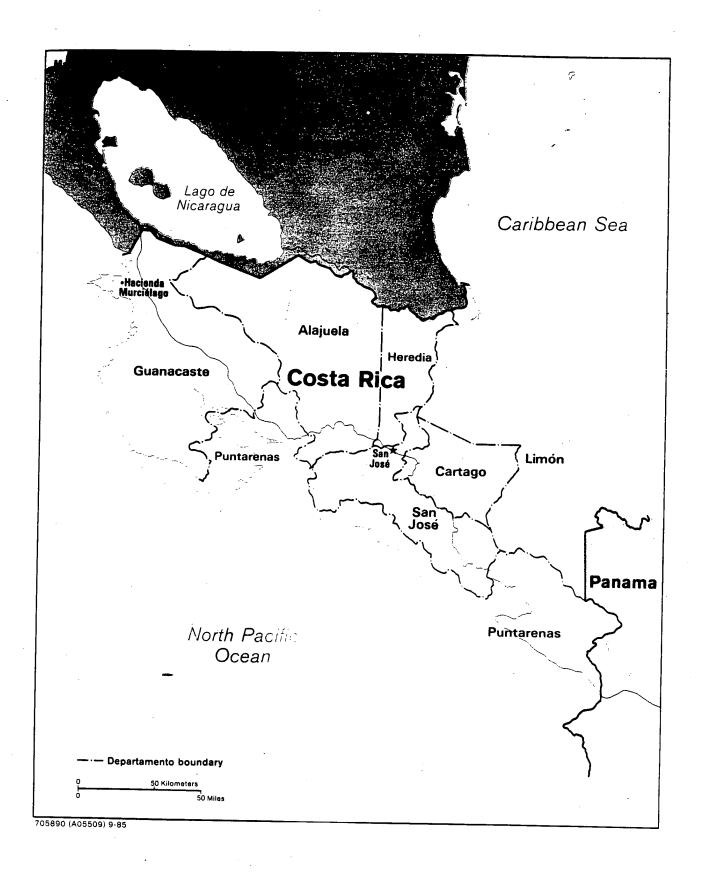
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Anti-LIS	Activities						
	COUNTIOS						
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Cos making L Commun clashes v blocked t	ist-led demor vith police, ac	tne tocal point estrations prote	t for demonsi sting the arri ss accounts	trations and p val of US mil In addition 1	propaganda itary advise eftist legisl	I. In May, two ers resulted in ators in Augus	
Cos making L Commun clashes v blocked t	ist-led demor vith police, ac the port visit	the focal point estrations prote cording to pres	t for demonsi sting the arri ss accounts	trations and p val of US mil In addition 1	propaganda itary advise eftist legisl	I. In May, two ers resulted in ators in Augus	
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Cos making L Commun clashes v blocked t legislative	ddition, the Pof Limon in re	estrations prote cording to presof a US aircraft  PC plans to est esponse to the	t for demonst sting the arri- is accounts. carrier, succ	trations and particular transfer to the value of US mill and the value of the value	oropaganda itary advise eftist legisl ing that suc	the Costa Rice	st ired
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Prospects	
sharply criticized the	slight favorite in the polls—is elected President in February, the pace of d accelerate. Calderon, representing the Social Christian Unity Party, has he Monge administration for being "soft" on Nicaragua. He repeatedly has k diplomatic relations with Managua and to seek closer ties with the US if
sharply criticized the threatened to bread the assumes the project prospects for a ma	y guudicidle. Calderon representing the social chainsing their, or
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sharply criticized the threatened to breat the assumes the project for a magrave social and education of the segment of these groups to conform the segment of the segment	ti-Communist climate, along with continued Cuban and Nicaraguan the extreme left faces a number of constraints that will limit its near-term Personal rivalries and a tradition of fractiousness must be overcome acquiring the canability of sustain revelocitions.
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in the past have severely tested San Joses recurity capabilities. Lacking a professional military and relying on poorly trained particularly vulnerable to leftist violence equipped civil and rural guards, Costa Rica is





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